# BLISSFIELD

FEBRUARY 2006 VOL. 12 NO. 1

### VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

### **NEWS OF IMPORTANCE**

### **New Village Office and Police Station**

After a lengthy review and selection process, the Village has selected George Hartman Architects, from Bloomfield Hills, to be the architect for the new Village Office and Police station project. During the course of selecting the architect, we reviewed several different design possibilities, and George Hartman Architects was chosen because their design concept went the furthest in addressing the various issues with the building and the site. They have just begun the work on designing the facility, and will soon be asking for further input from Village staff, boards, and members of the public. This input will be incorporated into the project design as appropriate, and the design should be completed by

May. We hope construction starts by July. We should move into the new building sometime in 2007, at which time we will schedule a formal dedication ceremony and open house. We would then look to re-zone and sell the current building.

We plan to pay for the \$1,200,000 estimated cost of this project with a Capital Improvement Bond, which we plan to sell later this spring. The 20-30 annual payments for this bond will come from all 5 of the Village's major funds, which will help lessen the effect of these payments on each fund. It also eliminates any need to even consider asking for additional taxes to pay for this project, as we know that is not an option.

### Village Comprehensive Plan Review

At its February meeting, the Village's Planning Commission sent a new draft Comprehensive Plan to the Village Council. If the Village Council authorizes it for distribution, the Planning Commission will release the draft plan for a public review period. During this time, the draft plan will be sent to other governments (surrounding townships, the schools, the County, etc.) for their comments, and it will be released for review by interested members of the public. This period should take up to 95 days.

After the public review period, the Planning Commission can incorporate any comments it has received into the plan (as it deems appropriate), and then sets a public hearing on the draft plan. After the hearing, the Planning Commission can adopt the final version of the plan, and then send it to the Village Council. The Village Council has the final approval authority over the plan. The new plan goes into effect upon the final approval of the Village Council.

Watch in the Blissfield Advance for the public review and hearing notices, and if you feel inclined to do so, let us know your input on the draft plan. The Planning Commission (and other folks) has been working hard on developing this plan for the last year and a half, so please take the time to give us your input on the plan when it is released for distribution.

### 2006 Giles Swimming Pool Lifeguard Jobs

The Village is now looking for Lifeguards/Assistant Managers for the 2006 pool season. If you are interested, or know anyone who is, applications can be obtained from the Village Office. Interested individuals must have valid lifeguard and first aid certifications prior to starting work. There is no deadline to apply, but interested persons are encouraged to apply early. These positions must be filled this winter/spring in order to be ready to open the pool in May.

### **Snow Removal & Snow Emergencies**

According to the results of the on-street parking survey we sent out in the August 2005 Village Newsletter, a majority of folks who responded stated that they could support an overnight parking ban, but only in the form of a "snow emergency" type situation. Therefore, Council adopted a "Snow Emergency" ordinance in December. The ordinance permits us to formally announce a "snow emergency". When we do so (which we will do through newspapers, radio stations, and TV stations), cars must be removed from parking on the street for the stated duration of the emergency, so that we can do a safe, thorough job of cleaning the streets in the Village. We will attempt to contact folks who leave their cars (and other vehicles, etc.) in the streets, and we can have cars that are still there towed. We are working with people through the rest of this winter season, but will get tougher with enforcement for the 2006-2007 season.

Also, here is a reminder on the Village's snow removal policy. The Village generally performs a complete plowing and salting of the streets and public sidewalks after 1-1/2 to 2 inches of snowfall. The order of work priority is: 1) downtown streets, 2) major streets, 3) public parking lots, 4) side streets, 5) public sidewalks, and 6) final cleanup (large snow pile removal, etc.). If the snowfall total is less than 1-1/2 to 2 inches, or only ice accumulates, then plowing and salting are performed only as needed. The Village plows snow as soon as practical during and after any snow event, though exact timing of the plowing and salting depends on the specific event. The Village apologizes for any inconvenience caused by plowing-in drives or sidewalks, but it is an unfortunate reality in snowplowing. Your cooperation and patience will be greatly appreciated.

### SCHULTZ-HOLMES MEMORIAL LIBRARY

#### **THANKS**

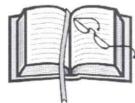
Our thanks go to all who returned their overdue books and paid their fines in food items for Christmas baskets. Your generosity helped those less fortunate during the holiday season.

### PRESCHOOL STORY TIME

Winter story times for boys and girls ages 3-5 are scheduled for each Wednesday morning from 11:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on the following dates:

February 1, 8, 15, and 22 March 1, 8, and 15

The story times are planned to include stories and activities especially for preschoolers. Come and join the fun. Parents and little brothers and sisters are welcome too.



#### ANNUAL BOOK SALE

Our annual book sale will be held during National Library Week. We will have a selection of books for all ages. The sale will be on a first-come, first-served basis. The sale is set for Thursday, April 6 from 1-8 p.m.; Friday, April 7 and Saturday, April 8 from 10:30a.m. to 5 p.m.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL BOOK CLUB

The Lenawee County Library is sponsoring a book club for Middle School age students at the Schultz-Holmes Memorial Library. The first meeting will be February 9 at 3:15 p.m. The highlighted book will be "Freak the Mighty". Read the book and join us for a discussion and movie. Upcoming titles for March, April and May are "Because of Winn Dixie", "Millions" and "Tuck Everlasting". If you love to read and would like to share your thoughts and ideas with fellow students and friends come join us.

### **NEW BOOK DROP**

The library has purchased a new free standing book drop for the convenience of our patrons. It will be located in the same spot as the old book drop.

### DID YOU KNOW?

The Schultz-Holmes Memorial Library is sponsoring a spring lecture series. The first in the series will be March 21 in the library auditorium. The speaker will be Claire S. Duvernoy M.D., Assistant Professor of Medicine, University of Michigan Health System. Dr. Duvernoy is Interim Chief of Cardiology and will be speaking on the topic of women and heart disease. This is a very important topic and we invite the public to attend. For upcoming dates and times and any other questions, please call the library at 486-2858.

#### LIBRARY HOURS

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY, and SATURDAY – 10:30 A.M. TO 5 P.M.

TUESDAY and THURSDAY - 1 TO 8 P.M.

CLOSED GOOD FRIDAY APRIL 14

Susan Berryman, Library Director Phone 486-2858, Fax 486-3565

### **DDA News**

When we all are making resolutions for the New Year or just trying to change one thing for 2006, I feel like the Downtown Development Authority has to motivate and accomplish some small projects in 2006. As I reflect over the past few months, I see that we have had a few things that have been done. Since I inherited a couple of unfinished items, they are now complete.

- 1). The Banners If you drive through the village of Blissfield you will see the new maroon and teal banners. Welcome and Explore Blissfield!
- 2). The Website It is updated and I'm working on the business directory that is in the DDA blueprint. Visit www.blissfieldda.com.
- 3). The Scarecrow Contest It was for the Blissfield Business and Downtown Merchants. We had businesses and families participate in this inaugural event. I'm sure that next year we will have more participate.
- 4). Facade Improvement Grants In 2005 we had \$26,740 in private investments and we approved \$9,063 in paid Facade Improvement Grant around the Village. Thanks to those business owners who participate in making improvements on their property and increasing the value of their property.

As I look to the future, I know that the DDA will have plenty to do in 2006. We will be updating the Directional Signage around town with updated name plates and locations. We will be working with Village Council on the vacant site for future development of the new Village office and Police Department.

I'm looking forward to more adventures and new projects in Blissfield. It's been fun; rewarding and I look forward to coming to Blissfield everyday. Keep on supporting your local businesses and building healthy relationships. We all have to work together for the bettering of our community. There is no "I" in team!

Happy New Year!
Shelly Woods
DDA Executive Director

V	illa	age Board Mee	tings	
The following is the	meet	ting schedule for various Village Boa	ards, from Ma	arch through May
March				
Monday	6	Village Planning Commission	7:00pm	Library
Wednesday	8	Village DDA	7:00pm	Library
Monday	13	Village Council	7:00pm	Library
Thursday	16	Library Board	4:00pm	Library
Monday	20	Village Council Committee	7:00pm	Village Office
Monday	27	Village Council	7:00pm	Library
April				
Monday	3	Village Planning Commission	7:00pm	Library
Thursday	6	Village Parks and Rec. Board	7:00pm	Library
Monday	10	Village Council	7:00pm	Library
Wednesday	12	Village DDA	7:00pm	Library
Monday	17	Village Council committee	7:00pm	Village Offic
Thursday	20	Library Board	4:00pm	Library
Monday	24	Village Council	7:00pm	Library
May				
Monday	1	Village Planning Commission	7:00pm	Library
Monday	8	Village Council	7:00pm	Library
Wednesday	10	Village DDA	7:00pm	Library
Monday	15	Council Committee	7:00pm	Village Offic
Thursday	18	Library Board	4:00pm	Library
Monday	22	Village Council	7:00pm	Library

# Blissfield Citizens' Academy

Starting in April, the Village Administrator will be conducting the 4th annual "Citizens' Academy", designed to help inform interested residents about their government. The academy will run on six Tuesday evenings, on April 11, 18, and 25, and May 2, 16, and 23. The sessions will be held at 6:30 pm at the meeting room at Blissfield's Library. Topics to be covered include Village organization, public information and elections, governing documents, planning and zoning, Village finances, Village services, and other similar topics. Anyone interested should contact Jim Wonacott (Village Administrator) at the Village Office, as seating is limited.

Again, this will be our fourth Citizen's Academy. We have had 18 people attend the Academies, and 16 of them have "graduated". We can take up to 10 or 15 people, so go ahead and sign up. It will be worth it!

### Village Office Holiday Closing

In order to observe Good Friday, the Village Office will close at 12 noon, Friday, April 14, 2006. It will re-open for regular business hours at 9am Monday, April 17, 2005. As a reminder, regular Village Office business hours are Monday through Friday, 9am to 5pm, except for holidays.

### 2005 Sidewalk Repair/Replacement Program

The 2006 program will focus on the entire Village. Village personnel will inspect sidewalks in the spring and any needed repairs will be done this summer. As is now policy, the Village will assume the costs of this program. Therefore, notices and bills will typically not be sent out to adjacent property-owners. Exceptions where bills could be sent to the property-owner include special situations where the property-owner or their contractor caused the sidewalk damage through other than normal wear-and-tear.

### Parking Survey Results

In addition to the "Snow Emergency" ordinance outlined elsewhere in this newsletter, a few other ideas came out of the parking survey included in the August 2005 Newsletter. After reviewing and studying the suggestions included in the survey results, the Council approved "no parking" areas on Pearl Street (both sides between Jefferson St. and Union St.), High St. (the east side from US223 to the curve at the cemetery), and S. Main St. (the north side from Monroe St. to the curve).

We also corrected some discrepancies between previous Traffic Control Orders and the signage and pavement markings that were installed to implement them. Having done all of this, we don't really expect to have to deal with any further on-street parking situations in the near future. We think we were able to cover everything we needed to in this process. Thank you to everyone who returned a survey, as your input proved very useful as we tried to figure out the best solutions.

### **Brownfield Redevelopment Authority**

In order to set Blissfield up to be able to react to any possible re-development efforts that may come along on possibly contaminated sites, the Village Council held a public hearing on the possible creation of a Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA) on February 13. If established, a BRA could be one more tool to assist a potential developer in re-developing a piece of property in the Village. According to state law, if a BRA is set up, the DDA would automatically become the board for the BRA, and the entire Village would be the "BRA district".

Once established, the BRA board would really have nothing to do until a developer and a project came along. If it proves to be the right thing to do in a given project, the BRA can work with a developer to assess any environmental contamination on a property, sell bonds to cover the clean-up costs, and use the additional taxes that that property would generate to pay back the bond. No such projects are being considered at this time, but the establishment of the BRA would put us a step ahead in case one ever does come up.

### 2006 Seasonal Grounds Maintenance Positions

The Village and DDA are now looking for up to 2 seasonal grounds maintenance workers. These positions would start in mid-April, and would continue through some time in December, depending on circumstances. These workers would assist with such duties as parks maintenance, right-of-way maintenance, maintenance of public areas in the downtown, and other similar duties. Applications may be picked up at the Village Office.

### Park Shelter Reservations

As usual, the shelters in Ellis Park and Clara Bachmayer Park will be available for reservations again this year. Village residents may begin making reservations on April 17 and non-Village residents on May 1. For non-reserved shelters, use is on a first-come, first-serve basis. A receipt, as well as an informational handout, will be given to persons who reserve shelter houses. These handouts cover available electricity, the location of nearby restrooms, emergency phone numbers, etc. Please obey the park rules, which are posted at various places in the parks.

### **New Playground Equipment**

Work on the new Boundless Playground at Bachmayer Little League Field has been finished for this phase, but the private playground committee that is overseeing this project still needs your help and support. While the construction of this phase is complete, the fund-raising is not. They still have a substantial amount of money left to raise, and they would appreciate your help and support. If you feel inclined to help, or know of another individual or organization that might help, please call Barb McHenry, at 486-5544.

The committee has been successful in replacing all three of the Village's playgrounds with the community's support, and we hope we can see this through all the way to the end. Please help if you can.

### **Brush Pick-Up**

Starting in March, the Village will resume twice-monthly brush collection. The collection days will be the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month, through October. The pick-up days for this quarter will be March 14 and 28, April 11 and 25, and May 9 and 23.

Please do not put the brush out until the weekend prior to the pick-up. Also, remember that brush must be placed in the right-of-way directly adjacent to your property. It should also be stacked neatly, in lengths of 8 ft. or less, and not placed around poles, fences, or other obstacles. Additionally, please do not mix grass, garden debris, leaves, or other materials with the brush, as we cannot pick them up.

### Spring Leaf Pick-Up

The Village will be performing its annual spring leaf pick-up at some point in mid-April. Please remember to place only leaves at the curb for this pick-up. Grass, weeds, and other lawn and garden debris mixed in with the leaves cannot be picked up. Please place your leaves and brush in separate piles. This will be the last leaf pick-up until the fall. Watch the Blissfield Advance for the exact date of the spring leaf pick-up.

## Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Abatement Program

Our program that includes inspections of possible sump pump and footer tile connections to our sanitary sewers will continue this year. We are about to complete the inspections for the east side of the River Raisin, and will finish the inspections on the west side of the

River this year. If it is determined that the storm (rain) water from your property is getting into the Village's sanitary sewer system (usually through sump pumps or footer tiles), state law requires that we make those property-owners correct the situation.

If you receive a letter from the Village, or a phone call from the Villages Plumbing Inspector (Ken Schaedler), please cooperate with us as we get through this burdensome situation. We'll inspect your hookups, and if your situation requires you to "fix" that hookup, we will send you a notice to do so (including your options). Any propertyowner who has to fix this problem, and who has not already done so, will have until November 31, 2006 to get the needed work done.

Again, this program is required by the state. Everyone's cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

### Swimming pools

Over the past couple of years, there has been an increase in the number of inflatable pools that have been put up around the Village. Pools can be dangerous for children in the community. For that reason, a zoning permit is required for these pools (and any pools with a design water depth of 24" or greater), prior to the installation to ensure that correct placement and other guidelines (fence requirements, height regulations, etc.) are met. Applications for a zoning permit can be obtained at the Village Office. Please visit our website, www.blissfieldmichigan.gov, or contact the zoning administrator for answers to any questions.

### Garage Sale Signs

With garage sale season near, this is just a reminder that the placement of garage sale signs in the public street right-of-way is not permitted. This is due primarily to line-of-sight and safety reasons. These signs may be placed on private property, with the property-owner's permission. For streets with sidewalks, the property lines are generally on the "house" side of the sidewalk. For streets without sidewalks, the property lines are generally 10 to 15 feet away from the pavement of the street.

### **Building Projects and Permits**

With spring fast approaching, there are many Village residents considering various building projects on their properties, houses, stores, etc. Please remember that most of these projects will require a building and/or a zoning permit, which will need to be obtained prior to starting the project. In order to see if the project you are considering would need such a permit, call Jennifer Tracy at the Village Office, at (517) 486-4347.

Projects that would require building permits include (but are not limited to) new buildings, building additions, new roofs, new siding, some sheds, and other similar projects. Typical projects that would need zoning permits include (but are not limited to) signs, sheds, fences, pools (as mentioned elsewhere in this edition), etc. If in doubt, please call the Village Office.

### **Historic Preservation Options**

As a result of some research and a paper on the topic by a recent Village intern, the Village Council, Planning Commission, and DDA have been discussing various options to enhance historic preservation in the Village. These options include additional state historical markers, additions to the National Register of Historic Places, designation of sites as National Historic Landmarks, and/or the creation of a local Historic District and Commission.

Each option carries with it different levels of costs and benefits, and all are being discussed at some length. Deciding what (if anything) to do will take some time, and may involve public hearings or other meetings as we go. Please give us your input when we get to those points. The participation of the local Historical Society will probably be requested, as well.

### **Recreation Department News**

Greeting from the Recreation Department ... the following is an update on the progress of the Village's various recreation programs as of the end of 2005.

Once again the Recreation Program showed progress as the youth sport programs continued to grow. The spring soccer, fall soccer, flag football, tackle football, and cheerleading programs continue to increase in numbers. The numbers showed that we gained approximately 75 new participants in the combined programs. This was in addition to the approximately 120 new participants from the previous year. This caused some growing pains such as having to find new and more facilities to play and practice at and having to purchase more equipment. These problems were solved, but not without some compromise and rescheduling conflicts among the various sport programs.

The Recreation Department continued to work with several of the service groups in the community to sponsor various events. In addition, we hope to make contact with community organizations in the near future to discuss other program options that might be available to better serve the community. These include improving the "Music in the Park" series and other local events that we sponsor, rather than just promoting sports programs for the local youth.

The Recreation Department has also developed a Program Guide for the first time that will be available shortly, both at the Village's website (www.blissfieldmichigan.gov) and at the Village Office. This Program Guide will detail all the Village recreation programs and events that are available at the present time.

Finally, the following is a financial breakdown of our Tackle Football Program so that residents of the Village can review an example of the costs of running such a program. This is in response to questions that have been asked about the cost of the program's registration and where the money is used.

#### Current Fee: \$60.00

- \$15.00 1/2 cost of reconditioning football helmet every 2 years.
- \$12.00 1 pair football pants.
- \$1.00 mouth guard.
- \$1.50 player's share of cost of 4 new footballs
- \$5.00 new pads every 3 years
- \$5.00 new shoulder pads every 8 years
- \$5.00 miscellaneous equipment
- \$13.50 (- officiating based on 60 players on 3 teams; @ \$90/game with 9 total games per season (3 teams with 3 home games). The \$90 includes either 2 adult officials at \$45/game, or 1 adult official at \$45/game and 3 high school officials at \$15/game.) Total allocated per player: \$58.00

These numbers show that we do not have much of a surplus for extra or unexpected expenses. For example, in 2005, we had the extra expense of having to account for an extra 5th grade tackle team when 28 more players signed up for the program. This meant that we needed to purchase 20 more sets of equipment at approximately \$160.00/set, or \$3200.00 total. Also, we have to periodically replace and recondition the current equipment to prevent liability issues.

So, as you can see, the Recreation Department does not make "a profit" in operating the Village's recreation programs. What we are doing is trying to operate a quality program while trying to keep the fees reasonable and fair. If you have any questions or concerns about different issues concerning the Recreation Department feel free to contact me at the Village Office.

Al Navarro Recreation Coordinator

### **POLICE NEWS**

### CRIME STOPPERS

Crime Stoppers is an international organization with a local chapter in Lenawee County. It is a non-profit community-based organization which combines the cooperative efforts of the community, the media, and law enforcement in the fight against crime. Guaranteeing anonymity and a cash reward, Crime Stoppers encourages the public to

call with information that leads to the arrest of criminals.

The National Organization began in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1979. As of October 1, 2005, 695,691 cases have been cleared and 376,896 arrests have been made. Today there are over 1,000 Crime Stopper programs throughout the world.

The program in Lenawee County began on 8/13/04. The program is based on the principal that "Someone other than the criminal has information that can solve a crime". Crime Stoppers encourages regular citizens to get involved. Citizens are members of the Board of Directors. The Board establishes



policy, determines the amount and method of reward payments, and works closely with the police and the media. The Directors are also responsible for fund raising. The media assists by publishing crime details in the paper and announcing it on the radio. The phone number 266-6161 is answered by a dispatcher at the Lenawee County Sheriff Office. If the caller says they have a crime tip, the call is transferred to the Duty Sgt who takes the information. If after the investigation, the information leads to an arrest, the caller is entitled to a reward.

The Blissfield PD endorses the Crime Stopper effort. We encourage citizens to call 266-6161 if they have information about a crime. People can always call the Blissfield Police directly, but if anonymity or a reward is important, the Crime Stopper number may be a better choice for you. Local law enforcement is always in need of citizen involvement and information. You do not have to wait for an article to appear in the paper asking for information to be eligible for Crime Stopper rewards. If you have information regarding a crime, you can call Crime Stoppers at anytime.

### CITATION FOR VALOR FOR SGT. JAMES A. NOVAK

As many of you may be aware, Sgt. Jim Novak's quick response and good quality police work on 12/9/05 helped apprehend two escapees from the Gus Harrison Prison in Adrian. On 1/9/06 Sgt Novak was presented with a Citation for Valor at the Blissfield Village Council meeting for his brave actions. President Jae Guetschow and Chief Jane Kelley presented him with a medal and a certificate. We are very proud of Sgt. Novak, who has served the Village of Blissfield for 27 years on the police department.

#### The certificate reads:

"On December 9, 2005 Central Dispatch broadcast a BOL for a burgundy Buick southbound on Ogden Hwy. The car was reportedly occupied by three subjects, two escapees from the Gus Harrison Prison and one hostage. Sgt. Novak took up a position on the west edge of the Village of Blissfield to watch for the car.

At 8:01 am a vehicle matching the description, passed Sgt. Novak's location. The vehicle entered the Coach Light Plaza parking lot with Sgt. Novak following and drove to the east end by the bowling alley. Sgt. Novak positioned the patrol car to box in the suspect vehicle. He exited the patrol car, drew his firearm, and ordered the driver to turn off the car and throw out the keys. He confirmed that the two escapees were inside the car and called for backup. Deputy Christopher Deschamps from the LCSO was the first to arrive. Sgt. Novak and Dep. DesChamps took both prisoners into custody.

Due to Sgt. Novak's quick and decisive action in the face of great danger, a convicted rapist and a convicted murderer were returned to prison.

It is with great pride that the Blissfield Police Department and the Village of Blissfield award you with the Citation for Valor award for your courageous action."

# BLISSFIFI ILLAGE NEWSLETTER

PrSrtStd U.S. POSTAGE PAID

BLISSFIELD, MI 49228 PERMIT NO. 30

Village of Blissfield, 408 E. Adrian St., P.O. Box 129, Blissfield, MI 49228

**FEBRUARY 2006** 

phone: (517) 486-4347 email: blissadm@cass.net website: www.blissfieldmichigan.gov

### 2006 VILLAGE ELECTION

2006 is the year when we make the changeover to November Village elections, per the state's Election Consolidation Acts. There will not be an election in March again this year. However, beginning this year, the Village will have an election during the regular November general election every even-numbered year (2006, 2008, 2010, etc.). Also according to that state law, Blissfield Township will run the election for the Village. The date for this year's election is Tuesday, November 7.

There are several seats up for election this year. They include 1 2-year term each for the Village President, Village Clerk, and Village Treasurer; 4-year terms for 3 Village Council seats; 4-year terms for 3 Library Board seats; and 2-year terms for 2 Library Board seats. There will be no primary election. The filing deadline for these seats is Tuesday, May 16, 2006 at the Blissfield Township Office (120 S. Lane St., Blissfield).

# Village Employee Christmas Party Silent Auction

A silent auction was held again this year at the annual Village employee Christmas party. Enough money was raised for The Salvation Army's Adopt a Family program to adopt three local families. This event would not have been possible without the support of our community.

The Village employees would like to thank the following businesses and individuals for donating items to our 2005 Silent Auction:

Hathaway House and Stable, Beckey's Kountry Kitchen, Coop's Barber Shop, Borchardt Brothers Market, Coach Light Estates, Rupp's Car Wash, lott Insurance, Blissfield BP, Mohr's Barber Shop, Made for Ewe, The Legacy, Royal Expressions, The Island Resort, Perky Pantry, Images by Linda, Gift of Touch Massage, Randy Kelley, TLC Credit Union, Blissfield State Bank, Blissfield's Old Country Store,

Cakes-n-Shakes and Lena's Italian Restaurant.